

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS:

Please substitute the attached replacement sheets for Figures 1A and 5 of the drawings as originally filed. Annotated sheets showing the changes are also provided herewith.

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration of this application, as amended.

Claims 1-6 have been considered in the Office Action. However, Claims 7-10 added by the Preliminary Amendment filed on September 9, 2004 have not been considered. Applicants submit that Claims 7-10 should have been considered in the Office Action and, therefore, that any subsequent action should be made non-final based on the fact that Claims 7-10 have not been considered.

Regarding the document request in paragraph 1 of the Office Action, Japanese Patent Application Laid-Open 2002-59853, cited in the specification, has evidently been considered by the Examiner since the document was cited by the Examiner on Form PTO-892. Applicants presume that the Examiner's request for this document was not intended to be included in the Office Action.

Regarding the IDS filed on September 9, 2004, in the IDS transmittal letter, the Examiner was explicitly requested to contact the undersigned in the event that copies of Documents AF-AH and AK-AO were not provided by the PCT International Authority. It is unclear why the Examiner did not contact the undersigned. Nevertheless, copies of Documents AH and AK-AO are submitted herewith. Documents AF

and AG have already been made of record by the Examiner on Form PTO-892. Relevance of the documents is provided by virtue of the International Search Report. The Examiner is requested to confirm consideration of Documents AH and AK-AO in the next official communication.

The specification and drawings have been amended to address most of the alleged informalities. Regarding the objection in paragraphs 6(h) and 6(l) of the Office Action, Applicants submit that the descriptions on page 11, lines 7-9 and page 13, lines 16-17 are correct. Regarding the objection in paragraph 6(i), Applicants submit that the term "secondary collision" is a technical term commonly used in the art and further addressed in the specification at page 1, lines 18-26. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the objections to the specification and drawings be withdrawn.

Turning to the claims, Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the indication of allowable subject matter in Claim 2. By this Amendment, Claim 2 has been cancelled, with allowable aspects thereof having been incorporated into Claim 1. Claim 11 has been added and also incorporates allowable aspects of Claim 2. Thus, Claims 1 and 3-11 are currently pending, with Claims 1 and 11 being independent and drawn to allowable subject matter.

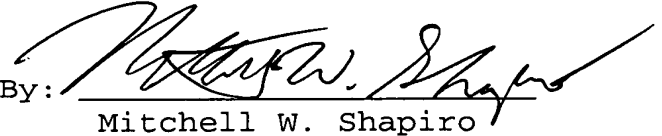
Further, as will be apparent, Claims 1, 3, 4, and 6-10 have been amended to address the alleged informalities insofar as appropriate. Regarding the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, in paragraph 8(w) of the Office Action, Applicants submit that the plastic deformation member for absorbing energy has been clearly defined in the specification, for example, at page 11, lines 10-20. One of ordinary skill in the art would have a clear understanding of Claim 6 in view of the description in the specification. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejections to the claims under 35 U.S.C. § 112 be withdrawn.

For the reasons discussed above, this application is now clearly in condition for allowance, and an early Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge to Deposit Account No. 50-1165 (XA-10163) any fees under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 and 1.17 that may be required by this paper and to credit any overpayment to that Account. If any extension of time is required in connection with the filing

of this paper and has not been separately requested, such extension is hereby requested.

Respectfully submitted,

By: 
Mitchell W. Shapiro

Reg. No. 31,568

MWS/FFR/dmt
Miles & Stockbridge, P.C.
1751 Pinnacle Drive
Suite 500
McLean, Virginia 22102-3833
(703) 903-9000

August 27, 2007

ABSTRACT

A spacer 16 is interposed between a body-side bracket and a ~~steering column to be retained and passed by a~~ supporting pin 21 column-side bracket for retaining a steering column., ~~so as to be latched on either one of the~~ ~~both brackets, meanwhile a~~ A pin insertion hole 19 through which ~~the a~~ supporting pin is passed is formed ~~on the~~ in the spacer. and ~~a~~ A portion of the spacer to be broken by the shock of collision ~~shock time breaking portion 19a~~ is formed in a region of the spacer ~~the surroundings thereof~~ the pin insertion hole.

FIG. 1A

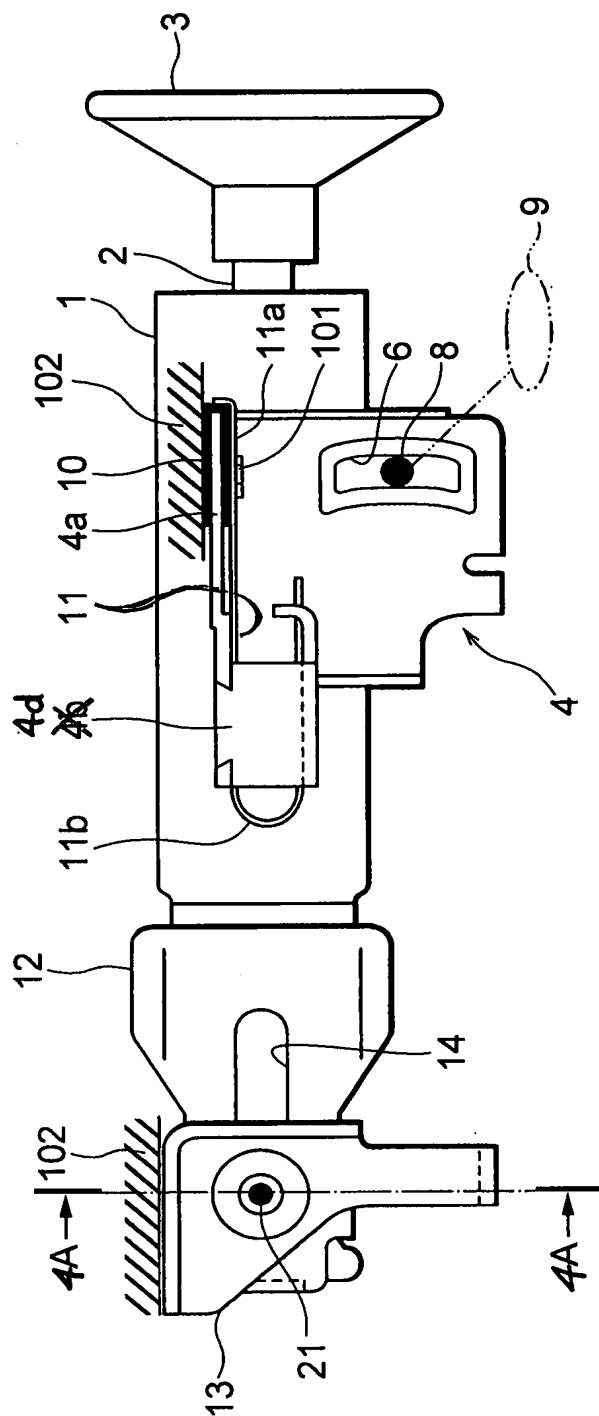


FIG. 1B

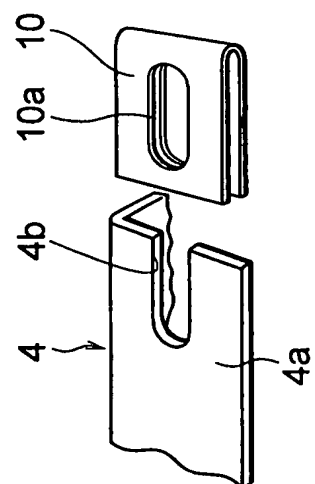
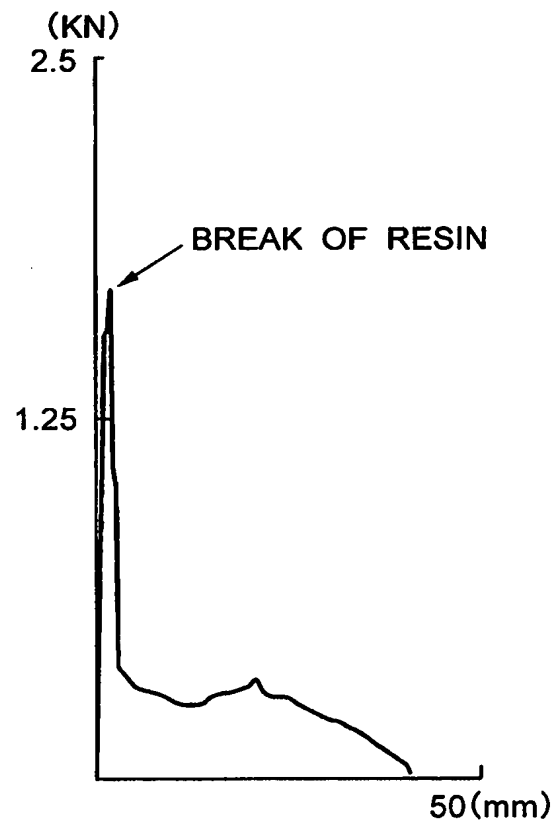


FIG. 5



LOAD DIAGRAM OF THE SPACER